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No. 4

The House met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. BEREUTER].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

January 21, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable DOUG BEREUTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We join in the words of the Psalmist who wrote: "Behold how good and pleasant it is when God's people dwell in unity. It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes. It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore."

Among all Your bountiful favors to us, O gracious God, is the knowledge that You have created every person in Your image and You have blessed every person with those gifts that make us truly human: the gifts of justice and mercy, the gifts of peace and good will, the gifts of unity and common purpose.

May all Your blessings, O God, that flow from the early morn to the last light, be with each of us and remain with us all our days.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

IN THE MATTER OF REPRESENTATIVE NEWT GINGRICH

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule IX and by direction of the Select Committee on Ethics, I send to the desk a privileged resolution (H. Res. 31) in the matter of Representative NEWT GINGRICH, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

HOUSE RESOLUTION 31

IN THE MATTER OF REPRESENTATIVE NEWT GINGRICH

Resolved, That the House adopt the report of the Select Committee on Ethics dated January 17, 1997, In the Matter of Representative Newt Gingrich.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution constitutes a question of privilege and may be called up at any time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Before we proceed, the Chair will have a statement about the decorum expected of the Members.

The Chair has often reiterated that Members should refrain from references in debate to the conduct of other Members where such conduct is not the question actually pending before the House, either by way of a report from the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or by way of another question of the privileges of the House.

This principle is documented on pages 168 and 526 of the House Rules and Manual and reflects the consistent rulings of the Chair in this and in prior Congresses. It derives its force primarily from clause 1 of rule XIV which broadly prohibits engaging in personality in debate. It has been part of the rules of the House since 1789.

On the other hand, the calling up of a resolution reported by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or the offering of a resolution as a similar question of the privileges of the House, embarks the House on consideration of a proposition that admits references in debate to a Member's conduct. Disciplinary matters by their very nature involve personalities.

Still, this exception to the general rule against engaging in personality—admitting references to a Member's conduct when that conduct is the very question under consideration by the House—is closely limited. This point was well stated on July 31, 1979, as follows: While a wide range of discussion is permitted during debate on a disciplinary resolution, clause 1 of rule XIV still prohibits the use of language which is personally abusive. This is recorded in the Deschler-Brown Procedure in the House of Representatives in chapter 12, at section 2.11.

On the question now pending before the House, the resolution offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut, Members should confine their remarks in debate to the merits of that precise

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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